

Illinois U Library

NOVEMBER 28, 1946

# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

BROADCAST BY STATIONS OF THE AMERICAN BROADCASTING CO.



## How Should Food Be Distributed After UNRRA Expires?

*Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.*

### *Speakers*

FIGURELLO H. La GUARDIA

TYLER WOOD

### *Interrogators*

WILLIAM YANDELL ELLIOTT

CHARLES GRATKE

*(See also page 16)*

### COMING

—December 5, 1946—

**Should the Wagner Labor Relations Act  
Be Revised?**

—December 12, 1946—

**Is Radio Operating in the Public Interest?**

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### THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 5:

#### "Should the Wagner Labor Relations Act Be Revised?"

### THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 12:

#### "Is Radio Operating in the Public Interest?"

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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



NOVEMBER 28, 1946

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## How Should Food Be Distributed After UNRRA Expires?

### Announcer:

Tonight your Town Meeting is originating within a stone's throw of the spot where the Pilgrims landed 326 years ago. Here in the Memorial Building in Plymouth, Massachusetts, we are the guests of the National Council of Social Studies and the Plymouth Colony Association.

The Council, which is holding its annual meeting in Boston, has had a large part in the development of the Junior Town Meeting League which is promoting the use of Town Meetings in high schools throughout the country. What more appropriate occasion and spot could we find for our Thanksgiving Day program and what more timely subject than "How Should Food Relief Be Distributed After UNRRA Expires?"

Here to preside over our discussion, as usual, is the founder and moderator of America's Town

Meeting, president of Town Hall, New York, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. It is indeed a privilege to be in this historic spot tonight. Yes, it's a stone's throw from Plymouth Rock, but also it's the birthplace of Thanksgiving Day itself, and the home of the first New England Town Meeting. Citizens of Plymouth, we do thank you heartily for this opportunity of being with you here tonight.

Many millions of us have just finished sumptuous Thanksgiving dinners with turkey, cranberry sauce, mince pie, and all the trimmings. Now let's give a thought to those less fortunate ones who not only had no turkey, but who live on barely enough to keep body and soul together.

No, don't touch that dial because you might hear something un-



pleasant, for if we don't make the right decisions about such problems as we face today, we may find ourselves in World War III before we know it. In fact, you might go to the telephone and call up a couple of your friends and tell them that Director General La Guardia of UNRRA and Mr. Tyler Wood of the State Department are going to give us some very important information and a lively discussion on this vital question.

Did you know, for instance, that UNRRA expires the end of next month? Although some of the shipments may continue for another six months, the institution itself goes out of the window on December 31.

You recall, of course, that UNRRA stands for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration which was established in 1943 by all of the United Nations to help the people of the war-devastated countries. Now Mayor La Guardia, as Director General of UNRRA, can you give us some factual background of this problem, with a few of the highlights of the job UNRRA has done to date. Mr. La Guardia.

**Mr. La Guardia:**

UNRRA has provided food and medical supplies, equipment and machinery for agricultural and industrial rehabilitation, medical services, technicians, engineers, and public health experts. In dollars,

it will total \$3,800,000,000; in quantity, 25,000,000 tons. These figures are not important, but these are:

It has fed over 300,000,000 people. It has saved the lives of 50,000,000 children. It has brought new hope to the people of 15 countries, mostly devastated by war. UNRRA has given the first lesson in applied world cooperation.

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Now, Mr. Tyler Wood as a member of the UNRRA Central Committee, I'm going to ask you to tell us for the record just what the contribution of the United States has been to this effort in terms of food, money, and material. Mr. Wood?

**Mr. Wood:**

Mr. Denny, the United States' contribution to UNRRA amounted to \$2,700,000,000, nearly three times the total contributed by all the other countries of the world put together. Even more important in this age of shortages, the United States has produced and delivered and shipped the quantities as follows: \$900,000,000 worth of food; \$400,000,000 worth of machinery, coal, and other industrial rehabilitation items; \$450,000,000 of agricultural rehabilitation items—tractors, fertilizers, and the like; \$250,000,000 worth of clothing and textiles;

\$200,000,000 worth of medical supplies.

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Tyler Wood. Now, we understand that while no one is suggesting that food relief be discontinued after UNRRA expires, there is a sharp difference of opinion between you and Mr. La Guardia as to how this should be handled. Now, Mr. La Guardia has made a proposal that he will outline for us in just a moment. Mr. Wood, who is the Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of State, Mr. Clayton, speaking for the State Department, doesn't agree with Mr. La Guardia's plan, and he'll tell us very shortly how the State Department believes this matter should be handled after UNRRA expires.

Following their statements, Dr. William Yandell Elliott, professor of government at Harvard University, and Mr. Charles Gratke, foreign editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, will act as our special interrogators. Now, let's hear first from the former mayor of New York City, the Director General of UNRRA, the Honorable Fiorello H. La Guardia. Mr. La Guardia. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. La Guardia:**

I just couldn't be in the State of Massachusetts without sending my personal greetings to Governor Maurice Tobin and to express my thanks to the State Police for their

courtesies in getting me to Plymouth today.

Yes, Mr. Denny, we've all had Thanksgiving dinner, and 139,000,000 Americans today are giving thanks for God's blessings and the privilege of being Americans. But in giving thanks it must be something more than just lip service. We, who have had enough to eat, must see to it that all people get *something* to eat.

Now, first, let me make it clear that there is no such thing before the United Nations Assembly as the La Guardia Plan. I presented a plan that is sponsored and represents the views of at least 49 nations and if the delegates of the other six nations were free to talk—including our own—they would support this plan.

Another correction I want to make and I'm sure you here in New England will agree with me that it is very bad taste to talk about how much more we gave than others.

Now there are many school teachers here this evening and I know you know simple arithmetic, even if our State Department doesn't, and as a mathematical proposition you must agree that the United States has not given one penny more than any other nation for the simple reason that all nations gave on a formula—one per cent of the national income of each country. So if I give \$100 to a Community Chest



and John D. Rockefeller of my town gives a million, we have both given alike.

Another thing to bear in mind before the evening is over is that when UNRRA was organized it was agreed among 48 nations that only such nations whose lands have not been invaded were to contribute. I need not explain the reason. I've seen these devastated countries. They have nothing to give.

Now UNRRA is the international agency of 48 nations and it is one of the most beautiful things that came out of this terrible period. Its purpose is to pool resources and its original intent was to have an organization, ready with food and medical supplies, to walk into a country the minute it was liberated. And it did just that.

Its co-operation is in accordance with the spirit of the Atlantic Charter. Its purpose follows the Charter of San Francisco which created the United Nations. But, it is operated in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.

The allocations are not made by the Director General. The allocations are made by a central committee consisting of the representatives of nine nations. They studied the needs and made the allocations in accordance with the needs.

I know I can speak for my predecessor, the distinguished

former Governor of the State of New York, Herbert Lehman, and I assure you I can speak for myself, that at no time in making allocations was there any interference or any influence because of religion or political beliefs.

That is what I want to avoid. If this matter is left to the individual nations, whether my own or another, it will result in power politics. We will return to the old system of Tammany Hall in my town where the political boss handed out a Thanksgiving basket, a few bags of coal in the winter, and then herded the poor to vote on election day. I broke that in my city and I don't want to see it established in the new world that we are now entering. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. La Guardia. Now for the arguments on the other side of the case, may we hear from Mr. Tyler Wood, United States member of UNRRA Central Committee and Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs? Mr. Wood. (*Applause.*)

#### **Mr. Wood:**

Mr. La Guardia, following right after you on the radio puts anyone in a tough spot. It's like following Bing Crosby, and you are a sweet and persuasive singer.

The plan I am advocating, Mr. La Guardia, is designed specifically to meet the particular situation

which will confront us in 1947, just as UNRRA was designed to meet the very different situation immediately following the war.

I propose that each nation should immediately consider what it can contribute to the coming 1947 relief efforts. It should discuss its plans informally with others, both those planning to help and those needing help, to obtain their views and to co-ordinate its activities with all others concerned.

The Secretariat of the United Nations should be used as a clearinghouse by all of us. The United States would keep the Secretary General fully informed of what we were doing and others should do the same.

Now, why do I think this is the way to do the job in 1947? For the same reason that I believe in using a saw when I have wood to cut and in using a hammer when I want to drive a nail. You do a better job when you use the right tool for that job.

That simple rule was followed when we helped design UNRRA. Then, right after the war, chaos threatened and all the liberated nations needed all they could get as fast as it could be given them. In these countries, there were no governments to collect or buy supplies, no food, no medicines, and no transportation to distribute them.

UNRRA was designed to step into this particular breach. It did so magnificently, as Mr. La Guardia and I saw on our trip together this summer. Trains are running, fields have been plowed and harvested, essential utilities are operating again. The first battle in the campaign to conquer the economic ravages of the war has been won.

Now the problem is, in most cases, not urgent relief, but further recovery and reconstruction. If the world is to win this battle, we and others must help the countries struggling upward.

But most of them don't need free relief of the type provided by UNRRA. The further rebuilding of a railroad, additions to the generating capacity of a country, improved mechanization of coal mines—these are income-producing projects and should be financed through loans and not through free grants.

We have taken the lead again in providing the tools for this. The International Bank, the Monetary Fund, will assist nations in obtaining the credit needed for reconstruction and for stabilizing their currencies. The capital of these two institutions will amount to \$15,000,000,000, of which we provide about \$6,000,000,000.

Then there is our export-import bank and the direct foreign loans made by us amounting to nearly \$10,000,000,000 more.



What, then, remains to be done? Do not these measures make any further free grants unnecessary? Are we wasting our time in talking about it?

No, we're not, for there will be a real need. A few countries will still need free grants, for they are not yet far enough on the road to recovery to get along otherwise. They will need these grants very urgently and promptly in the period between late winter and early summer, when their harvests begin to come in.

If this free assistance is not available at that time in adequate amounts, then we shall surely see suffering and starvation in these few countries. Remember, many need help, but only a few need free assistance.

But in the Board of Nations, suggested by Mr. La Guardia, each nation's representative will be instructed to get all the free assistance he can and his political life may depend upon his success. The result will be logrolling. Those who don't need free help will get some, those who do need it desperately will get less than they need.

We cannot afford to let this happen in the case of the short-term emergency program we are discussing. We have seen examples of this in UNRRA. I know of one country which still has a substantial amount of sup-

plies, mostly equipment, coming from UNRRA.

You could take all these, turn them into food, and send it to another UNRRA country. This second country still would not be eating as well as the first does now. But you can't make the adjustment thoroughly and quickly through a Board of Nations. If you think you could, I'd like to resign my job on the Central Committee of UNRRA and let you try it.

Take another case. Suppose a country were building up a large army or using its plants and raw materials to make tanks and weapons, instead of using them to provide for the needs of its people. Should they get free assistance when they can help themselves?

No Board of Nations would act quickly enough to deny or to stop free relief in such a case.

Some people are saying, let's be frank about it, that we wish to retain control over the way our funds are spent because we intend to use food as a political weapon. I, categorically, repudiate this. Our past record and what we do in the future will give a convincing answer. But we do insist that the food we provide be not used by others for political purposes either.

We want to be sure that it goes to the hungry and not just to those who vote right. The drive



to keep food out of politics must go down a two-way street.

There's another practical advantage of our plan. The needed funds must be available during the latter part of this winter, when UNRRA shipments start running out. There's barely enough time for action by Congress after it convenes in January. The complications of an international board or agency would greatly prolong the debate and might indeed defeat the effort to obtain funds.

Are we turning our backs on international co-operation if we follow the plan I suggest? I'll let you decide this.

Just remember that I am proposing full consultation with all other nations concerned and suggest that we use the Secretariat of the United Nations as a clearinghouse for information to help us in coordinating our efforts.

This is international co-operation in a form best designed to deal with the problems we face.

We are actively supporting international co-operation across the board in the International Refugee Organization, against great opposition, I may say; in F.A.O.; the International Trade Organization; and the World Help Organization. It would take more time than I have to list them all.

The plan I've outlined is the most practical that can be designed to meet the particular situation we face. It is flexible and

adaptable. Its very directness and simplicity should insure obtaining the needed funds as quickly as possible and their use where they are most needed without discrimination on political, racial, or any other grounds. It involves the kind of international co-operation needed in this case. I hope it will win the support of the people of this country. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Tyler Wood. Now we're ready for the analysis by our special interrogators. We'll hear first from Mr. Charles Gratke, foreign editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who has an analysis and some questions for Mr. Wood. Mr. Gratke. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Gratke:** Thank you, Mr. Denny. Our speakers tonight are in the position of the actor Monty Woolley, who once played Santa Claus at Macy's Department Store. He was unprepared for the fact that the children would ask him for things — everything from bicycles to grand pianos.

Very quickly he figured out this line, "That's hard to get, son, but I'll see what I can do."

Relief has been hard to get, but these men have been seeing what they can do.

Let me give you one fact that will give you the magnitude of this problem as nothing else can. The atomic bomb costs \$2,000,000,000. We have spent, as a Nation, in relief with UNRRA alone, nearly

\$2,800,000,000. The United States will spend in relief of all categories nearly \$25,000,000,000—more than 12 times the cost of the atomic bomb. If that isn't a contribution to humanitarianism in the midst of war, I'd like to know what it is.

The thing that needs to be done, it seems to me, is to carry that forward in the form of international cooperation.

Now, happily, our speakers do not disagree upon the need for relief. We have all of us traveled over Europe. We have seen Europe in the days of planting and in the days of cultivation. We have seen the farmers going around burned out tanks with their furrows. We have seen the fields without horses and without cattle.

On the need for relief, there is complete agreement. But there is disagreement over methods.

What are those disagreements?

The first one is whether it should be international or national in the sense of its control.

The next one is whether or not the situation has changed.

The third one is really, and spoken very softly, which plan will get the money out of Congress.

I think the State Department has read the election returns. Mr. La Guardia has read the election returns, too. The question basically before the American people is going to come down to one of isolation or nonisolation.

Another question that has been raised on which there is disagreement is which plan will result in logrolling. As I see it, what Mr. La Guardia is saying is that we are going to roll our logs in public. What Mr. Wood is saying is that we want to roll our logs in private.

Now we have a question for Mr. Wood. The question is Russia, and will we feed the nations which are in danger of becoming dependent on Russia?

Mr. Wood, I would like to ask you this: Have we abandoned the countries on the edge of the iron curtain and given up the fight to bring democracy to eastern Europe?

**Mr. Wood:** Mr. Gratke, let me answer the second part of your question, first. I think it's abundantly clear that we have not given up the fight to aid democracy, anywhere. All you need read are the strong statements of our own State Department in favor of the agreements, for free elections and freedom in all the countries of the world everywhere, wherever they may be. The first part of your question is—

**Mr. Denny:** He wants you to repeat the first part of your question.

**Mr. Gratke:** You've answered the question, but I'll ask you another one. It is this: What guarantee can you offer that national administration of relief will be more efficient than international



administration in sending relief where and when it is urgently needed?

**Mr. Wood:** Mr. Gratke, I can say as to that that the flexibility, the adaptability, and the simplicity of the plan that I am proposing, namely, that each nation figure out what the relief needs are and act on them, is the best guarantee that I can give you. Certainly that flexibility would make it possible, as it would not be possible through a board of nations to stop relief promptly when it became no longer needed, or when it was being abused, as has been the case on several, in fact many, occasions.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Mr. Gratke, did you want to ask another question?

**Mr. Gratke:** I'd like to say, Colonel Wood, that it is assumed, in your answer to that question, that you believe that one nation working in private is less selfish than a group of nations working in the light of the world.

**Mr. Wood:** Not at all, Mr. Gratke, that wasn't my point, at all. I say that one nation, determining what it can do, what it will do, and then consulting all other nations concerned and getting their points of view, can develop a more flexible and a more adaptable program which can be put into effect much more quickly than if we have to engage in long debates to handle this particular emergency problem in a

board of nations each trying to get all it can for itself out of this relief pool that has been suggested.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Wood. Now, it's time for our other analysis by Dr. William Yandell Elliott, professor of government at Harvard, who has an analysis and some questions for Mr. La Guardia. Mr. Elliott. (*Applause.*)

**Dr. Elliott:** Thank you, Mr. Denny. It's Thanksgiving, and the Mayor has talked turkey. He usually does. I'm all with the Mayor. I hope we don't have to call him Director General—most of us think of him affectionately as Butch, and that is quite all right. (*Laughter.*)

He did a swell job in picking up the pieces of UNRRA, if I may say so, and putting together the tower of Babel. That was the most difficult administrative organization to control in the world. Quite apart from the logrolling that Mr. Wood has spoken about, to get people to act on any common grounds throughout all this multilingual group, with all sorts of different standards and responsible to different governments, was a terrific job, and the big job has been done.

Now, I think what we are up against is whether or not the State Department's proposal, which is that the nation that takes three quarters of the burden should now,

at this late stage in the game, administer what is left over of the job for specific countries and they are very few.

The few countries we are really talking about on any relief basis today are Italy—that's a very serious one—Austria, extremely serious, and the Russians have made it more serious all the time by stopping the flow of food there. They've plundered Hungary and that's not too strong a word to use for it. They have increased their reparations in grain and everything else. They are continuing to pump out of Eastern Europe in general large amounts of food. They are keeping armies quartered there and the Yugoslavs themselves are keeping 600,000 men under arms who ought to be producing food.

Now I think you can see that politics enters into this from two points of view. It enters into it from the point of view of our record being absolutely clear in the occupied regions and elsewhere. We have never used food to coerce votes in any part of the world, and want to nail that on the line and challenge any kind of contrary opinion.

On the other hand, Red is the political color of the use of food in every part of that part of the world that has fallen under Russia.

Now let's face the facts. If we want to talk turkey, let's talk

turkey. Let's see who's going to divide the bird, and the Congress of the United States, I think I can say without much fear of contradiction, is going to have the job of the determining whether the fellows that are pulling the tail feathers out of the eagle are going to do the dividing.

I want to put a couple of questions to Mr. La Guardia. I'd like to ask him this one. Do you think, Mr. La Guardia, that it is a political use of UNRRA funds, if Albania, for instance, uses the trucks, that have been given to her to move food and other things, for her army and sells, as I think she has, about \$11,000,000 worth of UNRRA supplies and uses the money primarily to arm herself and shooting up the cruisers of the Allies with the proceeds?

**Mr. La Guardia:** Come, come, now, Professor. (*Laughter.*) Don't assume facts in your question. If your facts were true, I would answer you but none of your facts are correct, and I challenge Mr. Ty Wood of the State Department to get up here and corroborate what you say.

**Dr. Elliott:** Well, that's fine, Mr. La Guardia, and I think we'll have Mr. Wood on the stand. It's a little delicate for him to make some of these remarks. I can assure you that the facts I am talking about are based upon the information that our Government has and, in some instances, has



supplied to UNRRA that I'm perfectly certain of. This is not a question of professor against statesman—and I'm willing to give you that honorific title. It's a question of the facts of the case. I ask you for an answer.

**Mr. La Guardia:** All right.

**Dr. Elliott:** Do you say that Albania has not used these trucks?

**Mr. La Guardia:** In the first place, it's a question between the truth, or a statement of facts that are correct or incorrect. Your facts are absolutely incorrect.

**Dr. Elliott:** Then we'll call on Mr. Wood on that instance to adjudicate them a little later on. I'd like to ask that also of your colleague, Mr. Gratke. I'd be very glad of his views on this.

Now in the second place, if Yugoslavia keeps 600,000 men under arms, who could produce food, when we send in three quarters of a million tons of food to keep them going under their dictatorship, that arrest UNRRA officers when they inquire into where this food is going, is that or is that not a political use of food?

**Mr. La Guardia:** In the first place, Yugoslavia has not 600,000 men in the army.

**Dr. Elliott:** Are you prepared to assert that as a fact?

**Mr. La Guardia:** I am prepared to assert that. I was in Yugoslavia. I inquired and my best authority is Secretary of War Pat-

erson who brought down that figure to 300,000. And let me tell you that most of these 300,000 are working repairing railroads and bridges. No UNRRA employee, I give you my word, has been arrested for inquiring about food. One was arrested for espionage and we took him out of the country. (*Applause.*)

**Dr. Elliott:** Then you agree that he was. Would you say as director of UNRRA that threats and intimidations and arrests have not been made to prevent this?

**Mr. La Guardia:** I'll say it absolutely and the State Department knows it. Now I have received some information from the cocktail intelligence department. (*Laughter.*) Oh, the information we get that is collected around five or six in the afternoon, you know. Of all the complaints made, Professor, not a single one has been substantiated.

**Dr. Elliott:** Now let's put somebody on the stand to talk about this. Let's put Mr. Gratke on. He lived over there. He saw this. How about it, Mr. Gratke?

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Gratke, will you come up and testify?

**Mr. Gratke:** No one can say that UNRRA has been 100 per cent perfect. There have been cases of the abuse of UNRRA food and supplies. It's difficult to fix how extensive those are. But that is history and the—

**Dr. Elliott:** I'm asking you the plain question, Mr. Gratke. Is it or is it not your opinion that Yugoslavia has used men under arms that could have been producing food? Second, is it or is it not a fact that Yugoslavia has intimidated in many cases both are diplomatic officials and UNRRA officials and prevented them from getting access to the information on its distribution?

**Mr. La Guardia:** I'm the one to answer that.

**Dr. Elliott:** All right, go ahead, Mayor. (*Laughter.*)

**Mr. La Guardia:** I assume that, oh, no, I assume responsibility. I'm the Director General of UNRRA, not Mr. Gratke. (*Laughter.*) I've received these complaints. No UNRRA official has been intimidated because I don't permit it. And when I send a message to the head of the government, I don't send it in diplomatic language—they understand it! (*Laughter.*)

**Dr. Elliott:** There is no possible doubt about the kind of language you use, but what about its effect? You didn't stop the Russians, did you, from stopping the flow of food in Austria when they refused to fulfill the Potsdam Agreement and send food and supplies to the Western Zones? You tried to, but did you do it?

**Mr. La Guardia:** Now, wait a minute. Just ask Mark Clark whether we did or not.

**Dr. Elliott:** Well, I've seen the cables on that one within the past week and they do not agree that you have and I don't believe you can say that you have.

**Mr. La Guardia:** The food raised in Austria must be used for the Austrian economy. I'm not in charge of Austria. There are four armies there. There have been abuses on the part of the Russian forces in the Russian Zone, but I am not going to punish the people of Austria by withholding supplies because one of the occupying armies is not playing the game.

**Dr. Elliott:** That's not the question.

**Mr. Denny:** Just a minute, Dr. Elliott. We've almost reached the time for station break, but I do want to have Mr. Wood make a general observation as he's been called upon to witness. Mr. Wood.

**Mr. Wood:** This has been a very interesting discussion. I think it pretty well goes to prove the point I was making. I don't want to talk about any particular nations. I just want to talk about the abuses that have, perhaps, been inevitable in connection with the work of an international organization like UNRRA.

I think we've got full value for our money, but there are those abuses we've been talking about—Mr. La Guardia knows them just as well as I do. It's one of the main reasons why I think we should proceed from now on, es-



pecially where there are just a few countries which need free relief, on the basis I have advocated. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. All right, Mr. La Guardia.

**Mr. La Guardia:** Now, in reply to that, I want to say that every complaint that has been made and brought up to the top level of government has been corrected. I think Mr. Wood now let the cat out of the bag. He refers to those nations that the State Department intends to help.

Another thing I want to make clear. You heard Mr. Wood state the plan. Now that was a nice statement. Mr. Adlai Stevenson, United States delegate, made also a beautiful statement before the UN, but there is not one word in the United States proposal now pending before the United Nations that has one scintilla of a thought about any international cooperation at all. It is simply a national handout. There's quite a difference in the statements made and in the plan presented to the United Nations.

**Mr. Denny:** Well, Mr. Wood.

**Mr. Wood:** Mr. La Guardia, I have to correct you on that. The statement made and the resolution proposed talks about "full international consultation."

**Mr. La Guardia:** I'll read it.

**Mr. Wood:** All right, let's have it. (*Laughter.*)

**Mr. Denny:** We'll probably get in trouble with the Federal Communications Commission for going overtime, but go ahead. They're nice fellows.

**Mr. La Guardia:** Oh, let's don't worry about them. (*Laughter.*) I never did, and I had a radio station when I was Mayor.

Here is the United States' plan. In the first place, it was said by Mr. Stevenson that aid would be provided when and where needed. Not a word about that here.

Listen to this. Here it is: First, there's the preamble. Well, you know the preamble, that doesn't mean anything, and we agree with the preamble. One, directs the Secretary General to transmit to all members of the United Nations and international organizations concerned the information called for in paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned resolution. You know what that is? It's the information that you can get if you write for it. It's the needs of the nations. That's what he calls international cooperation.

Now listen, it "...calls upon all members of United Nations to assist in the furnishing of relief during the ensuing year and to develop their respective relief programs with the greatest possible speed."

It passes the hat around and lets each nation do its own contribution to the nations that they pick. It invites contributing gov-

ernments to coordinate their respective programs by "informal consultation so as to achieve the maximum results." "Informal consultations" in the language of diplomacy means just nothing. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. La Guardia. Mr. Wood is singing, "Give me five minutes more" back there, but we'll give it to him as soon as we pause briefly for station identification.

**Announcer:** You are listening to America's Town Meeting of the Air coming to you from the Memorial Building in Plymouth,

Massachusetts, where we are discussing the subject, "How should food be distributed after UNRRA expires?" For your convenience, a complete copy of tonight's discussion is printed in a small pocket-size pamphlet that you may receive by sending your request together with ten cents to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. That's Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

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## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**IORELLA H. La GUARDIA**, now Director General of UNRRA and commentator for the American Broadcasting Company, was mayor of New York City for three terms. Born in New York City in 1882, Mr. La Guardia has an LL.B. and an LL.D. from New York University, and also LL.D. degrees from St. Lawrence University and from Yale. From 1901 to 1906, Mr. La Guardia served in the diplomatic service in Hungary and Austria. From 1907 to 1910, he was an interpreter at Ellis Island.

In 1910, Mr. La Guardia began his law practice in New York. He became deputy attorney general of New York in 1915. From 1917 to 1921 and from 1923 to 1933, he was a member of the United States Congress.

In 1934, Mr. La Guardia became Mayor of New York City and served in this position until the present term. He is now writing for *PM* and is a radio commentator. When ex-Governor Lehman resigned as head of UNRRA, Mr. La Guardia was appointed to replace him. In this capacity he has traveled widely in Europe.

**TYLER WOOD** — Colonel Wood is a special assistant to Under Secretary of State, William L. Clayton, and is United States member of UNRRA Special Committee.

**WILLIAM YANDELL ELLIOTT** — Born in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Dr. Elliott has his A.B. and A.M. from Vanderbilt University. He also received a certificate from the Sorbonne, in Paris, and a degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Balliol College of Oxford University in England.

Dr. Elliott has been on the teaching staffs of Vanderbilt University, the University of California, and Harvard. He has taught government at Harvard since 1925. Dr. Elliott has been a consultant with such groups as the President's Committee of Administration Management; National Advisory Defense Commission; and the Office of Production Management. He was also director of the Stockpile and Transportation Division of the War Production Board.

**CHARLES EDWARD GRATKE** — Mr. Gratke was born in Astoria, Oregon, in 1901. He attended the University of Oregon from 1919 to 1921. Between 1920 and 1926, he was a member of the editorial staffs of the *Astoria Evening Budget*, *Oregon City Enterprise*, *Portland Oregonian*, and *Detroit News*. Since 1927, he has been a staff member of the *Christian Science Monitor*, serving in turn on the New York staff, assistant to the executive editor, Berlin correspondent, European editorial manager in London, general news editor, and since 1937, as foreign editor.



and address clearly and allow two weeks for delivery. Now, here's our moderator again, Mr. Denny.

**Mr. Denny:** Now, here's Mr. Wood, with his reply to Mr. La Guardia.

**Mr. Wood:** I really must take some issue, now, with my good friend, Mr. La Guardia. In the first place, I'd like to say—and this I don't blame him for—he is somewhat out of date as to the resolution which the United States is proposing in the United Nations.

In addition, there has been suggested—and it has been accepted with alacrity—that into that resolution go a further statement as to the value of the Secretariat in acting as a clearing house for information for all those who wish to consult and develop their programs together, and I would like to read in a slightly different tone one of the things that he read. You know tone is very important when you read something.

**Mr. Denny:** Yes, we found that out on radio when we had Mae West. (*Laughter.*) Go right ahead.

**Mr. Wood:** Now let me read it in a sympathetic tone, if I may. It "invites contributing governments to coordinate their respective programs by informal consultation so as to achieve the maximum results from their efforts." That, with the use of the Secretariat of the United Nations as a

clearinghouse for information as a place where people can go to develop their plans and thoughts, it seems to me is the kind of international co-operation we're talking about.

Now may I just say one more word, Mr. Denny? In connection with that very heated discussion that went on, and which I fortunately stayed out of, concerning abuses, I want to just add one statement. I again have to take real issue with Mr. La Guardia. I think he knows that there have been really proven cases in certain countries—in Albania, particularly—of the misuse of UNRRA vehicles, on the basis of which, for a while, UNRRA shipments were stopped until the matter was cleared up.

I also wish to say that a Commission that he himself appointed reported the arrests of considerably more than one UNRRA employee in Yugoslavia.

Now, I don't want to single out any one nation, but the matter has arisen, and I must meet it. There have been similar difficulties and abuses in many of the countries, both in the countries that are in the so-called Eastern area of Europe and in other countries which Mr. La Guardia implies are going to be special pets of this Government in its own relief program. The abuses have taken place in many areas and again let me just summarize by saying that is

one of the reasons why I think this plan for the emergency and small residual relief program next

year is the best one. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Mr. Wood.

## QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Denny: Among the things we should be thankful for tonight is the right to stand up in open meeting and ask questions of top-ranking officials about the work that they are doing in our democracy, so let's use this privilege wisely and ask good, useful questions.

Before we take your questions, I want to read a telegram that has to do with a statement that was made by one of our speakers last week, because it seems to me no more than right, inasmuch as the speaker last week stated that the National Women's Christian Temperance Union had stopped advocating prohibition.

Here's a telegram from Mrs. D. Leigh Colvin, the president of that association: "Statement of last week's Town Hall of the Air, that W.C.T.U. has stopped working for prohibition is incorrect. W.C.T.U. has always and will continue to work for prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages. Will you please make this correction accordingly on tomorrow night's program."

So you can pay your money and take your choice. The statement was made by one of our speakers last week and there is the state-

ment of the president of the W.C.T.U.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, to encourage you to ask good questions limited to 25 words, Town Hall is offering a \$25 United States Savings Bond for the question which our committee of judges thinks best, among those asked, for bringing out facts and broadening the scope of this discussion here tonight. We'll start with the gentleman down here on the fourth row.

Man: Mr. La Guardia, why should we continue to support Russia's program in Europe by giving the lion's share of relief, thus depleting our own resources, while Russia saves hers? (*Applause.*)

Mr. La Guardia: We don't and it doesn't.

Mr. Denny: All right, sir, number two, then. Is that all, Mr. Mayor? Is that all you wanted to say?

Man: Mr. Wood, since food distribution has political implications, cannot the United Nations, better than one nation's state department, impartially feed the maximum number of the world's needy?

*Mr. Wood:* I think not, from my experience in UNRRA. It seems to me that it's perfectly clear that you do get that logrolling, of which I've talked in my speech. Each nation's representative wants to get all he can for himself. The best example is that Mayor La Guardia is talking about free relief of four hundred millions next year. Just a few days ago the representative of one country got up and made an impassioned statement, proving conclusively that his country alone—and it's one of the smaller ones—needs three hundred million dollars next year. The rest get the hundred million. When you get claims like that, it takes you a long time, and the logrolling results, it seem to me, in sending things to those who don't need it and having less left for those who do.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, the lady down here on the fourth row.

*Lady:* Mr. La Guardia. Since the world is made up of nations at different stages of economic development, why couldn't Sir John Boyd Orr's Surplus Food Board plan be adopted by the economic and social council of the United Nations?

*Mr. La Guardia:* The same sources in the State Department that now want to take over full control of relief have blocked progress of Sir John Orr's F.A.O. The United States delegate, and I was proud of him at Copenhagen,

made a beautiful statement, but when the preparatory commission met in Washington, then the striped trousers of the State Department stepped in and blocked it and are blocking it now.

I want to say also in reference to the distinguished representative of the State Department that the amount that he stated of an applicant nation was not all for food. It included some of the money which the International Bank can provide in loans, and I want to say to the gentlemen over here concerning Russia, that that old argument has been repeated so many times that in this new plan of the United Nations, the USSR will make their contribution the same as any other nation can. Now I want to make that thing clear, because the questions here, the statements made, are not in accordance with the facts.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. La Guardia. Dr. Elliott has a question.

*Dr. Elliott:* I'd like to just—of course, it's a little bit awkward to have disagreement on facts as fundamental as the ones that we've had. Russia is, no doubt, going to make a contribution. She will make it, curiously enough in the main to Byelorussia and the Ukraine, which are, after all, part of the USSR, but by the fiction that these are outside, she will make her contributions to the countries, just as she found it pos-



sible to send 500,000 tons of grain to France, and by-passed the short haul to Yugoslavia when we were giving to it, at that time last year before the French elections, of course. I am very happy to have the State Department member verify the point of view that I've been trying to bring into this.

No one can argue how many soldiers, exactly, Yugoslavia has. Mr. Mayor with all his omniscience can't, in the nature of things, know. But he can know and must know, that we are seeing Europe systematically drained in the East and that if we try to make good that deficit instead of putting the food where it counts the most, to help the people who are not being drained in some instances, but whom we can help come through this crisis, we'll do some good. Furthermore, about the food plan, just a word on that because I think that is very important—

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Elliott, could I let you get on that as soon as the Mayor responds to what you just said.

*Mr. La Guardia:* Now this is the third time we've heard it this evening. This is proof absolute now, that it is the plan of the State Department to give aid to some nations and not other nations. I'm very sorry, as an American, to hear that.

*Dr. Elliott:* Well, I can correct that immediately. If there is anybody that does not speak for the

State Department, I am certainly that man. I have been very critical of the State Department, openly and publicly, and have written some of the reports of the Colmer Committee in the House that have been critical. But in this instance, I happen to think they are representing the only American point of view that has the slightest chance of public support. Let us put this question very frankly, if we are going to get relief and get it in time, and I very much support the necessity of relief for some of the countries of Europe that badly need it, including, by the way, our own occupied zone, we have got to get the support of Congress. Mr. La Guardia said over and over again we can get it just as easily for UNRRA as not. I'll bet him a hat he can't. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* A ten gallon hat? All right. The gentleman down here.

*Man:* I have a compound question here for Mr. Wood. You speak of the expediency of your plan. Isn't it still necessary for Congress to make appropriations and if so, how long will that take and will Congress better respond to a United Nations plan?

*Mr. Wood:* I cannot obviously speak for Congress. The Mayor is much more of an expert on that subject than I am. However, you are quite right that we would have to go to Congress with a re-

quest for an appropriation for this purpose. My own feeling from the discussions I have had is that we would be more likely to get an appropriation for relief on the basis of the plan I have proposed than on the plan involving the allocation of a pool to which we contribute by a group of nations, some of them the ones interested in getting the proceeds of that pool.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Wood. I am sorry we haven't time for more questions but we are going to have summaries by Mr. Wood and the Director General in just a few moments. While they prepare their summaries, here is the Announcer to tell us about some programs to come in December.

*Announcer:* Well, friends, we're thankful to be able to tell you that we have four great programs lined up for you for the month of December. Next week we'll tackle one aspect of the major domestic problems before the nation—"How To Deal With Disputes Between Labor and Management?" Ever since its enactment in 1935, the Wagner Labor Relations Act has been a matter of considerable controversy in labor-management circles.

Next week, the President of United States Chamber of Commerce, Mr. William K. Jackson, and the Director of Organization for the A. F. of L., Mr. Frank

Fenton, will discuss the question, "Should the Wagner Labor Relations Act Be Revised?" Our special interrogators will be Mr. Henry Hazlitt, business columnist for *Newsweek Magazine*, and Mr. Henry Wise, attorney.

For a long time now, we've been promising you a discussion of radio itself. So on December 12 in Greenwich, Connecticut, we'll consider the question, "Is Radio Operating in the Public Interest?" Our speakers will be Frederick L. Wakeman, author of *The Hucksters*, Clifford J. Durr, Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission; Mr. Sydney Kaye, general counsel for Broadcast Music, Inc.; and Mr. Mark Woods, president of the American Broadcasting Company.

On December 19, General William J. Donovan, former director of the OSS, and Mr. Norman Thomas will discuss the question, "Is World Disarmament Possible Now?" Two veterans of World War II will be our special interrogators. Mr. Tex McCrary and Mr. Millard Lampell.

On December 26, the day after Christmas, your Town Meeting will be in Schenectady for its annual television program and the subject will be, "Would You Rather Live in a Small Town or a Big City?" Our principal speakers will be Mr. Charles Jackson, author of *Lost Week-end*, and Granville Hicks, author of the new

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book, *Small Town*. As our interrogators we'll have Tex McCrary and Jinx Falkenberg.

So make your plans now to be with us every Thursday night in December. Now here's our moderator again. Mr. Denny.

*Mr. Denny:* Here's Mr. Wood with his summary of tonight's question, "How Should Food Be Distributed After UNRRA Expires?"

*Mr. Wood:* Many countries need further help, but in the form of loans for further reconstruction for which ample provision has been made. Even without these their people will not starve. All that will happen is that their further recovery will be retarded.

A few countries will starve if they don't get free grants. Those which don't need free grants will move heaven and earth to get some. Their representatives dare not admit that they don't need them. Mr. La Guardia's board would be in an uproar with the clamor of contending claims and could never act quickly enough. The emergency period starting in a few months and ending in early summer would be over before the issue could be settled justly, unless we compromise by giving everybody something.

This is what I fear—that the needy would get less than they needed, because some would go to those who don't really need it.

As for the charges that we intend to use food as a political weapon or that we are proposing to withdraw from international cooperation, the past record of this great country, the nearly four billion dollars, including contributions of the American people through their voluntary agencies, like the Red Cross, which we have provided without political strings of any kind since the war, is a more eloquent answer than any words of mine. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Wood. Now, the Director General of UNRRA, Mr. La Guardia, for a final word.

*Mr. La Guardia:* I'm quite sure that Congress will reflect the views of the American people. It always has. I served 14 years in the House of Representatives in Washington. I'm quite sure that when the proposition is put to them, whether or not the United States, as a token of sincerity in backing everything that we've said and everything that you have heard tonight, will join with the other nations of the world and together help the nations in distress, or whether the American people want to turn over money to the State Department to play power politics with bread, I'm quite certain that the American people now having the leadership in the world for permanent peace, will join with the other nations in distributing bread as we're trying to



join in other matters of less importance. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Director General La Guardia, Colonel Wood, Mr. Gratke, and Dr. Elliot. I'm sure these gentlemen will welcome your opinion in the light of this discussion, so please send your comments to them to Town Hall, New York 18, New York, and we'll see that they're received by the principals.

I want to thank also our host, Mr. Linwood Chase, and Superintendent Burr F. Jones of the Na-

tional Council of Social Studies, and the Plymouth Colony Association, who entertained us so magnificently here.

Now, our committee of judges awards first prize to this question: "Why should we continue to support the UNRRA program in Europe, thus depleting our own resources while Russia conserves hers?" This was a local committee of judges. Congratulations, sir, if you'll come up afterwards, we'll take your name and give you the prize. (*Applause.*)

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